

Read to Me Stars Library Profiles

Clearwater Memorial Library [applied May 2003]

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Clearwater Memorial Library was one of 5 to participate in a three-year project (1998-2001) funded by the Albertson Foundation and coordinated by the State Library's Read to Me project. The project enabled the library to establish or strengthen early literacy services through community outreach to at risk families. The library also participated in First Book in 1998, 1999, and 2000 and in Child Care Reads in 2002.

Outreach: Provides storytime weekly to area schools and preschools; participates in Reading is Fundamental (RIF) book give aways, sponsors booths at fairs, and distributes new parent packets through the Clearwater County Infant Project. Services are funded through grants.

Partners: Collaborates with a variety of local service providers and early childhood professional groups to provide early literacy activities in the community; founded the "Read to Me" coalition in 1998 as an outgrowth of Albertson grant.

In library: Provides weekly story time and lapsit programs; monthly Family Night programs; monthly parent group meeting; targets underserved children for summer reading.

Collection: Collection supports storytimes for birth to 5, afterschool reading groups for ages 5-8; family reading and game nights; summer reading programs for birth to 18; and outreach to Head Start, elementary schools, and daycares. The library circulates story kits; board books and bilingual books.

Professional development: Staff have participated in early literacy training provided by the State Library and others. They also provide training for community members.

How library has benefited: Read to Me enabled us to create a community coalition that continues to work towards improving early learning experiences for children and their families. Our coalition has created programming to meet the needs of our community. Since, 1998, Read to Me has provided story times for children 0-5, a Parents as Teachers program for children 0-5, a Reading is Fundamental program that provides 2000 children with 3 free books per year, service coordination for our area and training for parents and childcare providers on early childhood issues. In March 2003, our Read to Me coalition was recognized by Governor and Mrs. Kempthorne as being one of Idaho's Brightest Stars.

Quote from partner: Clearwater Valley Hospital and Clinic grants coordinator:

"One of the [Read to Me] coalition's first goals was to start infant and toddler programming in the public library. That programming is now an established part of our community routine. The Coalition is heading into its sixth year of existence has brought many partners together and coordinated numerous community events and programs. The families of young children in our community have benefited greatly from the actions of the coalition."